



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

LAND USE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

GREG COX
First District

DIANNE JACOB
Second District

PAM SLATER
Third District

RON ROBERTS
Fourth District

BOB HORN
Fifth District

DRAFT

DATE: November 14, 2001

TO: Board of Supervisor

SUBJECT: DRAFT TRAILS PROGRAM GOALS AND POLICIES (District: All)

SUMMARY:

Overview

On July 18, 2001 (3), the Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare draft goals and policies for inclusion in General Plan 2020 and to initiate preparation of a Community Trails Master Plan, utilizing information from the Trails System Assessment dated July 2, 2001, with a concept of trail development on public and private lands. These goals and policies are to consider a baseline level of service, incorporate a Regional Trail Plan and Map within the General Plan, and place Community Trail planning outside General Plan 2020.

This is a request to approve for environmental review, the draft Trails Program goals and policies proposed for the Public Facilities Element of General Plan 2020. These goals and policies will guide future planning and implementation efforts for the County Trails Program. They have been reviewed by Community Planning and Sponsor Groups, local trail organizations, the agricultural community and other interested parties.

Recommendation(s)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Find, in accordance with Section 15262 of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, that since this is only a planning study for possible future actions that the Board has not yet approved, no environmental impact analysis is required at this time. Environmental impacts will be considered in the Environmental Impact Report for General Plan 2020.
2. Approve the draft Trails Program Goals and Policies for the purpose of including them in the Public Facilities Element that will be brought before the Board for final adoption concurrent with General Plan 2020.

Fiscal Impact

If approved, this request will result in no current year cost, no annual cost, and no additional staff years.

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Business Impact Statement

Not Applicable

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Advisory Board Statement

Draft documents were distributed to all Community Planning and Sponsor Groups, as well as trails advocacy groups, agricultural industry and other interested parties.

BACKGROUND:

On July 18, 2001 (3), the Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare draft general plan goals and policies for the County Trails Program utilizing information contained in the staff report and Trail System Assessment report dated July 2, 2001. The staff report described a three-facet concept for implementation of a new Trails Program. The first part involved development of programmatic goals and policies for inclusion in General Plan 2020. The second part included preparation of a Community Trails Master Plan and preparation of an Implementation Plan for the administration and management of the program. The final piece was implementation of the General Plan goals, policies and strategies for Regional and Community Trails as part of the final Board approval of General Plan 2020.

Today's recommended actions on trails program goals and policies address the first part of the three-facet concept for program implementation. Next, staff will develop a plan for implementing the County Trails Program in a manner consistent with the newly approved general plan goals and policies. This plan will detail estimated costs for administration, acquisition, construction, operations and maintenance of the trail system. Staff will also identify funding sources and methods by which the County can establish the Trails Program.

A Community Trails Master Plan and individual community trail maps will also be developed. Staff will continue working with Community Planning and Sponsor Groups interested in establishing or expanding local trail networks. The master plan will serve as the "umbrella" guidance document for community trails, and will provide for design and implementation criteria, and trail maps customized to match community needs.

Both of these items will be brought to the Board for consideration in September 2002. The final step in establishing the County Trails Program will be implementation of the General Plan goals, policies, and strategies for Regional and Community Trails, and final adoption of a Regional Trail Plan and Regional Trail Map as part of Board approval of General Plan 2020 scheduled for February 2003.

Trail System Assessment Report

The July 2, 2001 assessment report provided an analysis of trail needs, planning opportunities, implementation methods, potential management structure and funding. It affirmed that additional trail development is needed to keep up with future population growth and recommended concepts for community trail planning by way of a Community Trails Master Plan outside the General Plan, and the incorporation of a Regional Trail Plan and Map within the General Plan. It emphasized that the planning process for community trails should be flexible, community-based,

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and should consider a baseline level-of-service related to population as a guide for meeting community needs. Regional Trail planning should be less flexible, based on regional needs, and guided by connectivity. It also determined that sole reliance on public land for trails was insufficient to meet community needs and that a portion of the trail system would need to utilize private land.

Board Policy I-116

Board Policy I-116 is titled “Policy Establishing Criteria for the Development and Operation of a Regional and Community Plan Non-Motorized Trails and Pathways System. This policy, adopted by the Board in 1994, describes criteria for the acquisition, development, operation and maintenance of trails and pathways. When initially adopted there was a strong need for detailed guidance on various facets of the Trails Program. At that time, the only guidance document that existed was the Recreation Element of the General Plan which was void of procedural details relating to many program components.

However, upon approval and implementation of the new Trails Program in 2003, there will be up-to-date general plan goals and policies, a Regional Trail Plan and Map, a Community Trails Master Plan, and a trails Implementation Plan. Together, these documents will provide a comprehensive and coordinated set of goals, policies, and implementation criteria. Since trail and pathway acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance will be thoroughly addressed by these newly compiled documents, Board Policy I-116 will be obsolete and staff will recommend that it be deleted concurrent with implementation of the new program.

Highlights of Draft Goals and Policies

The trails program proposes four (4) general plan goals and a series of policies providing direction intended to meet those goals. Below is a summary of the key features.

Goal 1 is to provide a system of “non-motorized” trails that meets the needs of County residents by providing scenic and enjoyable experiences that include connections with parks, public open spaces, trail systems of other jurisdictions, points of interest, and/or sites with educational or historical significance.

- Policies include: providing and expanding trail experiences, and providing support facilities and staging areas; locating trails that highlight natural, educational, and historic resources; and providing a variety of linear distances and loop trails.

Goal 2 is to initiate and sustain an effective and efficient trail system, using the *Regional Trail Plan* and a *Community Trails Master Plan* as the basis for future planning, coordination, implementation, and management.

- Policies include: prioritizing trail segments; coordinating with other jurisdictions and participating in the completion of missing Regional trail segments; considering connectivity a principal planning element for Regional trails; encouraging a Community Trails Master Plan and considering a population-oriented numerical level of service as a principal planning element for community trails; considering use of pathways when critical connections cannot be made with conventional trails.

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Goal 3 is to consider both public and private lands for trail implementation.

- Policies include: seeking trail opportunities on County-owned lands and other public lands as a preference to the acquisition of private land; seeking opportunities through easements, dedications, license agreements, or joint-use agreements with public and semi-public agencies; obtaining access across private lands from willing property owners/sellers by purchase, easements, or dedication; requiring the dedication of trails from developments under certain conditions; establishing funding opportunities; and seeking methods for providing incentives to private land owners.

Goal 4 is to strive to manage, operate and maintain trails so that proper use is encouraged, and user safety, resource conditions, the environment, and adjacent land uses are not compromised.

- Policies include: locating trails that are sensitive to environmental resources and seek to utilize existing disturbed areas; encouraging the involvement of agricultural land owners and establishing guidelines to minimize impacts; and incorporating trails and pathways in certain public improvement projects and maintenance activities.

Public Input

Comments and suggestions regarding the draft Trails Program Goals and Policies were solicited from all Community Planning and Sponsor Groups, local trail organizations, and other interested parties. The draft Goals and Policies have also been made available for public review on the internet on the Department of Public Works web site: <http://www.sdcdpw.org/trails>.

Strategic Initiative

The County of San Diego Five Year Strategic Plan includes an Environmental Initiative with a vision to preserve and enhance the natural environment and quality of life. These trail goals and policies are in keeping with this vision.

Environmental Statement

No environmental impact analysis is required at this time. Environmental impacts will be considered in the Environmental Impact Report for General Plan 2020.

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Respectfully submitted,

ROBERT R. COPPER
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Draft Trails Program Goals and Policies
- B. Comments Received by the Public

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written disclosure per County Charter §1000.1 required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s): Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Planning and Land Use

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Public Works

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AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: _____
JOHN L. SNYDER, Director

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

(continued)

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

July 18, 2001 (3), Received Trail System Assessment report and directed CAO to prepare draft Trails Program Goals and Policies for inclusion in General Plan 2020, and to prepare plan and recommendations for implementing County Trails Program; November 15, 2000 (5), Approved additional funding to allow development of Trails Strategic Plan; September 13, 2000 (4), Directed CAO to proceed with a Countywide Trail System Assessment and present options to the Board; July 12, 2000 (14), Adopted ordinance providing defense and indemnification of property owners for dedicated trail easements; September 15, 1999 (8), Directed CAO to review moving trails issues from DPW to DPR; October 22, 1997 (1), Approved the Multiple Species Conservation Program; January 22, 1997 (5), Disbanded the Trail Advisory Committee of 2 ½ years after a review of committee problems and progress. Directed that changes to the Recreation Element of the General Plan be prepared and that an evaluation of the Santa Clara County Trails Plan and alternatives be brought back for review; March 2, 1994 (4), Approved Board Policy I-116 (with changes) and authorized a General Plan Amendment to add a Regional Trails and Pathways Map and make modifications to the Recreation Element. Directed that proposed changes be referred to a Trails Advisory Committee with input from the Community Planning Groups; March 31, 1993 (2), Authorized up to ½ of 1% of Gas Tax to be spent on Trails and Pathways (Pathways); March 28, 1993 (1), Approved the Otay Ranch Plan.

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

I-116, Policy Establishing Criteria for the Development and Operation of a Regional and Community Plan Non-Motorized Trails and Pathways System.

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

N/A

CONTRACT NUMBER(S):

N/A

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